



THE
BLIND
IN
POLAND



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WORLD CONFERENCE
ON THE BLIND
NEW YORK 1931

THE BLIND IN POLAND

GENERAL NUMERAL DATA
EDUCATION ASSISTANCE
SOCIAL PREVISION
PROPHYLACTIC

by

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GENERAL NUMERAL DATA



The *Definition of Blindness*. The following definition of Blindness was accepted by the Republic of Poland in 1921, when the first list of the Population was made: "Not only persons definitely blind should be considered as totally blind, but also those, who are unable to count the fingers on their hand on dark ground and from the distance of one meter, for they are unfit for

6 independent action in a strange place". This definition will be fully accepted, when making the second list of the population¹⁾. As the definition of "blind" can be different in various countries, the above mentioned should be kept in mind, when considering the number of blind in Poland, as the figures, concerning it, are based on this statement.

Number of the blind. According to the general list made on 30 September/1 October 1921, the total number of the whole population was:

TABLE I

Total	Men	Women
25.694.700	12.417.233	13.277.467

The number of *blind*:

TABLE II

Total	Men	Women
16.686	8.979	7.707

The division of those blind, conformely to their dwelling-places:

TABLE III

	Total	Men	Women
Towns . . .	3.984	2.093	1.891
Villages . .	12.702	6.886	5.816

The division of the blind into *active* and *passive* as far as professions are concerned:

¹⁾ Dr. Rajmund Butawski. — *Plan of the Second General List of the Population in Poland* Warsaw, 1930.

TABLE IV

	Poland Total	Men	Women
Total	16.686	8.979	7.707
Active	7.903	4.987	2.916
Passive. . . .	8.783	3.992	4.791

The above mentioned figures cannot be actually taken into consideration for the following reasons: 1) They are not complete, the territory of Poland having since been enlarged. 2) Dating since nearly 10 years, they are no longer quite real. All the numbers and data taken into consideration in the following study, date from 1930, therefore the number of blind must also be contemporary. The new list of population not being yet made, this number can be obtained merely by proportional computation. This has been done on basis of analogical relation between the number of the blind and the total number of the population in 1921.

According to the data, presented by the Chief Statistics Office¹⁾ the total number of the population in Poland amounts to 30.732.524. Therefore the number of the blind, calculated in the above mentioned way, amounts to 18.680.

The following table presents the proportional division of the population and the number of blind, dwelling in various Districts:

TABLE V

	Poland	Central Districts	East Districts	West Districts	South Districts
The population	30.732.524	12.905.270	5.213.493	4.366.903	8.246.858
The blind ²⁾	18 680	7 389	3.794	2.068	5.429
The appraised number of the blind, relatively to 10.000 people	5,43	5,35	6,61	4,56	6,58

¹⁾ *Statistics Register of the Republic of Poland, 1930.*

²⁾ *Estimated numbers.*

8 The division of the blind, according to their *age*.

TABLE VI
(estimated numbers)

Total	A g e			
	0 — 19	20 — 39	40 — 59	60 and above
18.680	3.048	4.210	4.887	6.555



EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TO THE BLIND CHILDREN

When examining the problem of Education Assistance to Blind Children in Poland, it should be remembered, that this part of special schooling in our Country cannot be compared with the same work, performed abroad, owing to special conditions in which Poland existed for a century and a half, after the loss of its Independence.

Due to the devision of Poland by three neighbours, each of which tried to kill Polish nationality by political oppression and by persecuting every movement of Independence, a problem of such an importance as the education of the Blind had to be postponed.

The annexers, neglecting our Country, established in their own sphere institutions for the Blind, and used for this purpose also polish money, collected from polish funds and taxes.

Nevertheless, we can be proud of the work, done during these hard years of trial, thanks to the force and vitality of the Nation and in spite of difficult political conditions, in spite of opressions and persecutions. An so, already in 1842 the Institute for Deaf-dumb and Blind was opened in *Warsaw*; the Institution for Blind in *Lwów* was opened in 1851; the Establishment for Blind in *Bydgoszcz* was founded in *Wolsztyn* in 1853 and transfered to *Bydgoszcz* in 1872. These establishments could contain but a little part of the Blind, left without any assistance.

At present Poland has six establishments for Blind Children. The following table shows the number of Children, schooled there on January the 1-st of each year, during the last ten years.

Number of Children in each Establishment in 1920/21 — 1930/31.

(TABLE I)

This is to prove, that since the Restauration of Poland, the number of assisted Children is slowly but constantly growing.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN EACH ESTABLISHMENT IN 1920/21—1930/31.

TABLE I

Date	Warsaw, Three Cross Square 4—6			Laski-Różana (per Warsaw) & 4 Wolność str.			Lwów St. Sophy's str. Nr. 31			Bydgoszcz 2 Krasieński str.			Wilno 54a Antokolska str.			Bojanowo (Department of Poznań)			Total
	boys	girls	Total	boys	girls	Total	boys	girls	Total	boys	girls	Total	boys	girls	Total	boys	girls	Total	
1920—21	13	5	18	15	15	30	19	7	26	30	29	59	—	—	—	—	—	—	133
1921—22	18	8	26	20	24	44	27	5	32	30	21	51	—	—	—	—	—	—	153
1922—23	20	5	25	17	21	38	24	12	36	37	21	58	—	—	—	—	—	—	157
1923—24	22	7	29	15	13	28	29	11	40	41	26	67	—	—	—	—	—	—	164
1924—25	27	10	37	16	13	29	26	12	38	48	35	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	187
1925—26	29	12	41	14	10	24	30	16	46	65	36	101	—	—	—	—	—	—	212
1926—27	38	18	56	14	11	25	29	15	44	62	37	99	—	—	—	3	2	5	229
1927—28	43	17	60	14	11	25	36	16	52	79	33	112	—	—	—	3	3	6	255
1928—29	48	15	63	33	12	45	36	17	53	74	39	113	6	5	11	4	4	8	293
1929—30	43	11	54	37	15	52	33	17	50	77	46	123	9	7	16	4	4	8	303
1930—31	42	15	57	43	18	62	33	22	55	76	47	123	10	7	17	5	4	9	323

Certainly it is an extremely small number in comparison with the needs of our Country, but we must take into consideration, that the life of a whole State having to be reorganised, this effort is great and promises a much better future for the Blind.

The Blind, schooled in various establishments are of different age and degree of blindness and their pecuniary conditions are also most various. The here-with presented table shows it plainly:

(TABLE II)

The number of the Children in each class does not surpass 15.

Besides general teaching, their instruction includes: professional preparation in music and piano tuning, and also gives them the possibility of choosing one of the following professions: weaving, brush-making, knitting, crotcheting, rope weaving etc., illustrated by table III.

(TABLE III)

The programme of teaching in all schools for Blind in Poland is equal to the programme of schools for sighted children, which means: seven classes of the Elementary School (some changes are necessary, due to the children's blindness, specially: in the drawing class, hand-works and special experiments in natural history, physics and chemistry). Most interesting experiences have been attempted lately in the method of work for blind pupils, namely: teaching by the method of **"Centres of Interest"** has been adapted in two of our schools, in *Warsaw* and in *Wilno*.

This attempt gives most positive results, for the method seems to fully correspond with the sightless child's psychics. The following programme of conferences, held in these schools, seems to be a kind of first essay, based on the methods of the "Centers of Interest". This method, on account of the special conditions of life and specific features of the blind's psychics, must be built on the child's interest in its nearest surroundings. Later on, this interest will grow wider and will gradually embrace its native land and the whole world. This programme being based on the method of the "Centers of Interest", the relation in space and time between the child and its surroundings must be taken into consideration, by studying first the surroundings of the child, including the animated and inanimated nature and next the work and collaboration of mankind. (With the course of time, this centre of the child's interest will grow much wider).

NOTIONS FROM DECEMBER THE 1-ST, 1930

TABLE II

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21, 22, 23			
Establishment	Sex	Age of the Children												Total	Number of totally blind	Number of semi-sighted	Blind since birth	Blind from accident	orphans	half-orphans	Families		
		up to 6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years	11 years	12 years	13 years	14 years	15 years	16 years and above	wealthy								middle wealth	poor.	
Warsaw	boys	—	—	1	2	1	3	2	3	3	5	22	42	20	22	10	32	3	13	—	5	37	
	girls	1	—	—	1	1	1	2	—	—	2	7	15	8	7	8	7	2	9	—	1	14	
Lwów	boys	—	—	1	1	1	—	2	3	3	2	20	33	22	11	24	8	6	11	—	—	33	
	girls	—	2	3	1	—	1	1	2	2	2	8	22	16	6	22	1	3	7	—	—	22	
Bydgoszcz	boys	—	1	2	5	10	5	3	3	4	3	40	76	46	31	29	48	10	20	—	16	60	
	girls	—	—	1	3	3	7	3	3	5	2	20	47	35	11	12	34	5	10	—	13	34	
Laski ¹⁾	boys	2	2	5	4	3	8	1	3	8	4	3	43	23	33	11	9	6	18	2	5	49	
	girls	3	2	3	2	—	1	3	2	1	1	1	19	8	24	11	3	7	9	—	5	27	
Bojanowo	boys	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	5	4	1	4	1	2	—	—	—	5	
	girls	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	3	1	3	1	—	1	—	—	4	
Wilno	boys	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	1	—	2	3	10	8	2	2	3	2	2	—	4	4	
	girls	—	—	—	1	1	—	2	1	—	—	2	7	5	2	2	—	—	2	—	4	2	

¹⁾ In the rubrics 15 — 23 twenty eight grown-up persons are included. They are being educated in the Establishment of Laski (per Warsaw) therefore the number of Children in the rubrics 3 — 14 does not correspond with the numbers in the rubrics 16 — 23.

NUMBER OF PUPILS IN COURSES & CLASSES
Notions from December the 1-st 1930

TABLE III

Locality	General Education							E m p l o y m e n t s										Improving Courses		
	cl. I	cl. II	cl. III	cl. IV	cl. V	cl. VI	cl. VII	Piano class	Violin class	Violon-cello	Chorus	Brush-making	Basketing	Chair caning	Organist employment	Crocheting	Mat-weaving		Book-binding	Hand knitting
Warsaw	6	—	8	10	—	5	5	39	18	3	47	15	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Lwów	14	—	12	—	12	—	15	5	5	—	—	14	10	12	11	—	—	—	—	—
Bydgoszcz	11	12	12	12	8	3	5	4	4	—	—	22	9	9	—	16	—	—	—	56
Laski	9	13	13	6	6	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bojanowo	3	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wilno	2	3	6	—	6	—	—	10	10	—	—	6	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

14 *1-st Level* (The "Centers of Interest": the Child and its nearest surroundings). The children come into touch with the ground, surrounding them: (the class-room, the boarding-school, the garden, the whole establishment etc.) and also with the familiar objects, and acquire the knowledge of the relations and proportions. The Child's easy circulation in the establishment and surrounding garden. A walk in the town, and the nearest neighbourhood of the establishment (plans of sand and clay). In connection with this work, the Child will get into touch with some manifestations of the animated and inanimated nature in different seasons of the year and relative to the Child's work on his garden-beds. Some reflex of the social life and of human collaboration.

2-d Level. (The Child and the surrounding nature in connection with human work) The Child has already some notion of the surroundings. The knowledge can now be enlarged. Thanks to the Child's personal experience and work on the garden-beds, one can now proceed to extend its knowledge of products and fruits of the field-labour. Thus, the Child becomes acquainted with new connections: the country, the plougher's work etc., and therefore learns more about the animal world. (Domestic animals, their life and work).

Having come into touch with the town and country life, the Children will be able to understand the dependency of each other (victuals brought into town, different ways of locomotion, produces, trade) and the necessity of social organisation and collaboration will thus be easily understood.

The collaboration of the country with the city will first make the Children understand the idea of community, which enables them to understand the basis of organised social life.

3-th Level. (The Child and the Community) Community life, cooperation and collaboration. Little by little the Children begin to understand different forms of community and social life. They become acquainted with all kind of organisations, factories, etc., with the life and conditions of the workman. (in relation to the workman's life and work, they get some knowledge about raw-materials, used in factories, their origin etc., which brings the Children into touch with some new products).

The Children become aware of the evolution of improvements, achieved in the factories and in the conditions, in which workmen carry out their task. They hear more about the material and moral

conditions of men in various surroundings. They realise that these conditions can be made easier in community life: the Community, its methods and organisation, laws and duties of its members.

4-th Level. (The Child and its Native Land). Principal sketches of the organisation of our Country's life. Gradual extension of the notions about community-life, into those about the life in a district, department, and in the whole State. Excursions on the map with the stream of the rivers. Notices of chorography. Historical notices in consequence of the chorography lessons. Knowledge of the habits and customs of the Polish Nation and of the beauty of the native Country. The world of animals and plants in various seasons of the year, different regions and parts of the Country. The study of historical documents. Coming into touch with the organisation of social and state life in the Country in various spheres of action.

5-th Level. (The Child and its Native Land). The relation between our Country and the nearest neighbours, at present and in the times of yore: different fights, wars, and the geographical position of the adjacent countries, their characteristic features, riches, fauna and flora, institutions, universal history only in connection with the Polish history. Special attention is drawn to the geographical position of our Country in comparison to the adjacent states (the passage from West to East, South to North) and when entertaining the children about the riches of our Country, informations are given about the raw materials, exported from Poland, as well as about the products, imported from other states. (Principal knowledge of Economy). They are also made acquainted with superfluous import (Duties etc). It is necessary to introduce the knowledge of classification, for the special aim of bringing order into the Child's notion of the nature, well known to it from the current and past years experience. This should be done in accordance with the method of the "Centres of Interest".

6-th Level. (The Child and the World) Remaining countries and parts of the world. Synthetical understanding of the human life on the earth-globe from material and spiritual point of view (natural riches, industry, trade, culture, public instruction, mutual relations in accordance with the Polish history, unions, treaties). A glance on the past epochs. In discussing natural riches and

16 technical improvements, principal notions of physics and chemistry.

7-Level. (The Child as citizen). The tasks and duties of an individual citizen towards his Country and towards the Humanity, as well as the duties of the State towards the citizens. Universal conception of the civic science, based on the knowledge of contemporary Poland. Taking the civic science as basement, make the Children acquainted with the cooperation of Nations. Discuss the meaning of the League of Nations, her aims, tasks and organisation. A short sketch of the history of the assistance to the Blind, its present condition and the organisation of the Blind's mutual support in the Native Country and in the whole World.

According to the method of the "Centers of Interest" all the school-teaching is in close touch with the programme of Conferences, it always has a definite aim and searches the resolving of some problem. This method does not only give excellent results in teaching, but also is of high value in the educational part. At these lessons, there can in general, be no question about education difficulties, the class is fully "alive", the Children, interested in their work, try to find out independently the ways to resolve the suggested problems; all this work forms but one great unity leading implicitly to argumentation and to the drawing out of conclusions and judgments, to the research of motives and helps the pupil to find out the motives of the question under discussion.

In resolving these problems every individual has to proceed independently.

Collaboration, mutual help, initiative, perseverance, endurance and a certain amount of strong will are absolutely necessary.

Another, most interesting experiment in the evolution of the methods of teaching the Blind, is the attempt to adapt **the integral method** in teaching to read and write. This method has been introduced by Mrs. *Strzemińska* and Miss *Surmówna* in the *Wilno* Institution for the Blind and it seems to be the very first school not only in Poland, but all over the world, where this essay is being put into practise.

Yet before we speak about the results of this experiment, we shall here-below quote a passage of Mrs. Doctor *Grzegorzewska's* study, entitled: The Structure of optic and touch-reading ("Struktura czytania wzrokowego i dotykowego — Polskie Archiwum

psychologii, T. I, 1926-7, No, I", Warszawa). This study was the scientific basement of the mentioned method and its' point of departure. 17

"The examination-says Mrs. *Grzegorzewska*-of the Braille writing, proves, that the number of dots does not play such an important part, as was till now believed. It is on the contrary undoubtful, that a group of dots, forms a much better subject for recognition through the touch, than only one or two dots: Letters, formed by several dots and possessing a characteristic form are at once recognised. And therefore it cannot be stated that the characteristic form of the letters has a secondary meaning. The knowledge of reading in raised dots being acquired, the number of dots will cease to play any further part and the decisive part will be played now by the integral shape of the sign, as it possesses a form, fit for touch. In reading, the dots of the letter cease to be felt one by one and the reader gets an integral picture of the letters and words. In principle, it matters to bring forth the notion of the words. The greater is the Blind's attention, the sooner will this idea be grasped.

Therefore, reading in raised-dots shows great analogy with optic reading. Unknown words render reading much more difficult, as they need analysing"...

..."Despite differences occurring between vision and touch, the structures of optic and touch reading are much alike in general features. It occurs from the above mentioned notions, that the structure of touch-reading, similarly to optic reading has "an upward course from down". Braille, who so keenly felt the differences between the optic and touch structures and grounded the blind's reading on the touch, yet modeled the structure of his method on the vision. At that time there was neither question of syncretisme in touch-reading, nor of grasping whole words or phrases.

Is syncretisme possible in the sphere of touch? Would it be possible to approach this structure vice versa: from "up to down"? We can assert it, for it has been proved, that the touch possesses nearly as well as the vision, the possibility of conceiving the whole shape of an object.

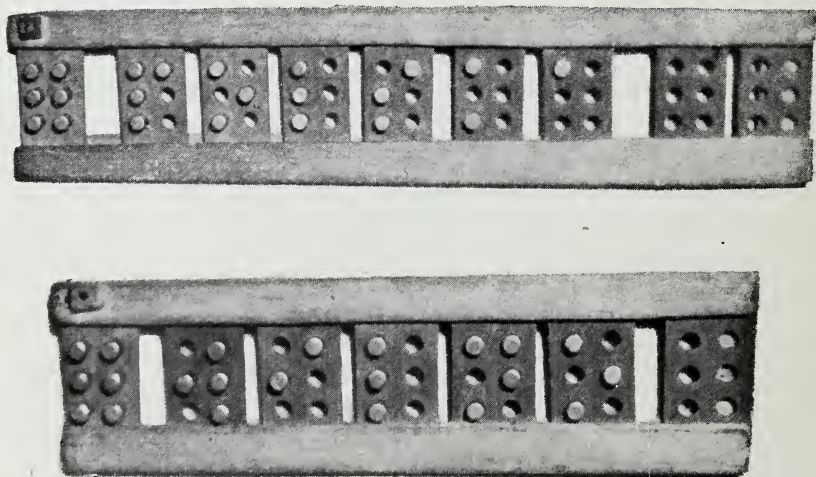
The conceiving of objects by touch is also a kind of figuring. When a blind feels an object, he first of all tries to conceive its shape. Such properties of the object like: smoothness or roughness, hardness or softness play a secondary part. It

18 anyhow must be remembered that the touch is a less syncretic sense, than the vision, for a single eye-glance easily embraces a very large space. It is necessary to point out, that in average less time is required for learning to read in *Braille* by a blind child, than for ordinary spelling by a sighted one. The motives of this difference can hardly be actually explained. It is possible that a blind child brings into its studies more attention, patience and good will, than a sighted child, for it understands that the learning of reading opens to him the door of the inexhaustible treasury of knowledge. This fact cannot diminish the value of the integral touch-reading, based on the general properties of the child's psychics. This method should be applied to all branches of teaching the blind.

The elaborating of an integral method in touch-reading seems to be much more difficult, than in optic spelling. At any rate, this problem must actually be resolved. The blind's pedagogy should be based on natural laws of psychic structures. Thus a new era in the development of this method will be wellcomed"...

Let us listen to what Mrs. *Strzemińska* and Miss *Surmówna* say about their teaching, based on the integral method.

„Reading and writing with the integral method were introduced into the *Wilna* School for Blind in 1928-31. For the teaching of it we have made a special apparatus of our own invention, composed of a frame with wooden tablets and a stylus.



Seperate tablets are introduced into the frame. Each of the tablets has six little holes, corresponding to the six dots of the Braille sign. Any Braille letter can be composed by shoving the stylus into the holes. Whole words are composed by introducing the tablets into the frame.

The teacher proceeds to teach the pupil by basing his method on the "*Centers of Interest*," duly accepted by the Wilna's Special School. A tablet on which a word or a phrase is written in Braille is given to the blind. The pupils touch it and try to remember. It happens very often, that thanks to a good memory the pupil is able to reproduce the word immediately. Since the very beginning of learning we insist on the child's writing backwards. If the pupil is unable to write from memory, he copies the model.

In short, the whole work is based: on the coordination of the pictural conception of the word with its name, on further copying and gradual engraving of the whole word in the pupil's memory. The blind's attention should not be concentrated on the constituents. Gradually the pupil will of himself begin to analyse. At any rate in our practise, this happens always after 2 — 3 weeks teaching. When the child is able to analyse, he can compose new words with the letters he already knows. The word being written, the child turns over the frame and spells. When writting, the square space in the frame must be above to the right and underneath. When reading, it must be above to the left, on the surface. Thus the children starting to read and write on paper will have no difficulties.

From the very beginning the children become fond of reading and writing. They enjoy the technic of the stylus setting, as well as the metallic sound of the toy.

After a certain practise, when the phrases they write are longer and take much room in the frames, the children themselves ask for paper.

It has been observed, that children writing words from memory or copying them, always give very resembling — if not absolutly identical — pictures of the model. This proves, that the child conceives the word in an integral way.

In our practise the integral method is especially important for this very reason that we have to deal with many children originating from extremely uncultured and unlettered villages. Entering for the first time the [school, they had absolutly no idea that one could read write. These children however, who entirely of them-

20 selves reached the analyse, have learned to read much sooner, than those who had only the opportunity of hearing someone of their relations reading at home. The latter, remembering separate letters and endeavouring to compose words, spelt them, which made reading very difficult. It is worth mentioning that the children who applied nearly integral method, without any rules, write very correctly and are surprised that other children, coming from public schools make such strange mistakes.

We also applied the integral method in cases of reeducation, using the mentioned apparatus. It happened only once, that to one blind child who had finished a Grammar School, we were obliged to show separate letters on tablets. He remembered them and in a week, wrote on paper.

Owing to this method, in the *Wilno* Establishment there were taught: 18 children and 14 grown-up blind. There were 14 illiterate children, normally reading 4; illiterate adults: 9; reading normally 5. Only one woman 35 years old did not learn at all to read and write.

The speed of learning reading and writing.

School Year 1928 29.

John M. 14 years of age, illiterate, blind from birth, was the first who began reading and writing. At the beginning of October he got a frame and tablets for the first time. After a fortnight he already was analysing and at the end of November was writing on paper. (In December he wrote a composition about *Wilno* and the 22 of December this work was exhibited at the School-Board of Directors of *Wilno* District) Three children, 14—15 years of age, were writing on paper in the middle of December.

Three children, aged ten, were given slates at the end of October. In the first days of December they were able to analyse fluently and after Christmas could read and write on paper. One of these children, a girl, after a bad meningitis, began to write and read, but with very little success. She improved at the end of 1930.

School Year 1929/30.

One of the boys, aged ten, was able to make copies in the first days of September, analysed three weeks later and wrote on paper in the middle of January.

In the middle of November two little girls, aged nine and twelve, were given slates. They were able to analyse a fortnight later and wrote on paper on the 1-st of March.

A boy, nine years old, could analyse after a fortnight's learning and wrote on paper 5 months later. (He touches very badly, his little hands are clumsy. He is unable to fasten a button, to tie a lace, he has never moulded).

School Year 1930/31.

Another boy, ten years old, analyses after three weeks, writes on paper after a month's learning.

A little girl, aged 9 (mentally undeveloped), was given slates in September and paper in December. In January she could write well, but hardly spell.

A 13 years old, unlettered boy: tablets end September, analyses after a fortnight, is given paper in the middle of December.

Unlettered adults: lessons 3 hours weekly. They analyse after several days, at any rate not later, than after a week. One of them, a woman, could read and write fluently after two months study. Some other blind were able to write on paper after 3—4 months. They all write easily, but spell very slowly. This can be explained as follows: people of very little intellect and totally uncultured, being busy in the work-shops, sacrifice very little time to reading. When reeducated, the blind are able to write in a few days, but read with much difficulty. (Mostly, they have but recently lost their eyesight).

*

Poland possesses an institution of the greatest importance, thanks to which, Special Schooling is sure to develop most successfully as far as scientific and pedagogic productiveness are concerned. This is the State Institute of Special Pedagogy, under the direction of Mrs. Doctor *Mary Grzegorzewska*, well-known authoress of many scientific studies in the domain of psychology. This Institute passed through several different stages, being first organised as a training-college (1921), gradually changing into the present form. The studies in the Institute last one year and then the students are trained in special schools and institutions. After a year's practise — if the training gives satisfactory results and if the written dissertation they have to present is accepted—they

22 obtain a diploma of the State Institute of Special Pedagogy. This allows them to be stabilised as Special-School teachers and to get a higher salary (by virtue of the law of October the 9-th, 1923, the salary of the special teachers is one degree higher, than that of the Elementary School teachers — and one degree lower than that of the Grammar School teachers).

The Institute was chiefly founded for the purpose of preparing teachers-educators, fit to work in all kind of special schools. The Institute possesses four faculties, accordingly to the division of abnormal children into four different groups: the blind, the deaf and dumb, the mentally undeveloped, the insane. The first month, the students become acquainted with the whole of the Institute's work. They receive full explanations, concerning every sphere of the Special Schooling, they visit institutions for all kind of abnormal. Shortly, they work in conditions, allowing them to get a full idea of the whole problem and to choose the speciality they are sure to prefer — both in school and education work — if ever their choice has not been made beforehand. Their choice once being made, the students have to be trained in establishments, corresponding to their future speciality and besides lectures, obligatory for all students, attend special courses.

And so, each student according to the speciality he has chosen, is obliged to accomplish some special theoretical and practical work in the sphere of his future speciality. At the same time, he is supposed to attend the lectures and fundamental studies, concerning all the branches of the Institute. We here-by present the programme of lectures and occupations in the State Institute of Special Pedagogy:

Lectures, tasks and practical occupations in all the Faculties:

(TABLE IV)

Beyond this, the programme includes:

(TABLE V)

We shall not quote all the subjects this programme includes, but just present it in general lines:

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE BLIND.

Preface: The Blind man. A sketch of his physical and psychical silhouette. A study of the society's relation to the blind. Blindness: kind and degrees. Blindness: partial, total, innate, acquired.

TABLE IV

	Hours a - week	
	Winter	Summer
	T e r m s	
1. Conferences on anatomy, physiology and School hygiene	2	
2. The child's physical development	2	
3. Training in the school-antropometry study-room .	2	
4. Pedagogical psychology	2	2
5. Training in the pedagogical psychology study-room	2	2
6. The basements of general psychosis (with demonstrations)	2	2
7. Psychopatology of the child (with demonstrations)		
8. Education in groups	2	2
9. The principles of education in boarding-schools		2
10. The development of the speech, digressions and their treatment	—	2
11. Training-College in pedagogy	4	4
12. Gymnastics, games and sports	3	3
13. Slöjd and its methodical side	4	4
14. The visitation of schools, education establishments, social assistance institutions and different cultured instructive organisations (one day a-week is destined for these excursions)		

TRAINING OF THE BLIND-CHILDREN TEACHERS

TABLE V

	Hours a - week	
	Winter	Summer
	T e r m s	
1. The psychology of the Blind	2	2
2. The methodics of teaching the Blind	3	3
3. The history and organisation of the blind's education	—	2
4. Singing and the systeme of its methodics	3	3
5. Training in schools for blind and test-lessons . .	9	9

24 Patogenesis and etiology of the blindness. Causes: inheritance, illnesses, accidents.

Statistics and geographical dispositions of blindness and eye-diseases.

Limits of education possibilities and social adaptation of the blind.

The meaning of the blind's psychology in connection with the general psychology. Methods of research.

The comparison of the psychical silhouette of the blind in childhood and in maturity with that of a sighted man.

The meaning of the loss of sight in early childhood and later.

The skin senses of the blind: touch, pressure, warmth and cold.

The blind's limit of space and of pressure.

Physiological and psychical conditions of the space limit. The influence of the exercise on Weber's limit. The figural character of the blind's mentality, The blind's imaginative discernment of colours by the touch. The so-called sense of localisation. The thermic senses.

Other senses of the Blind. The muscles sense. The static sense. Hearing. Smell. Taste. The so-called sense of obstacles and its psychical structure. The remains of sight.

The theory of Vicarage. (The theory of replacement of the senses). The historical study of this theory. The structure of the vicarage. The reasons of the touch-inferiority of some blind.

The blind's Perception of Touch. A glance on Heller's and Steinberg's theory. Figural comprehension of forms in space, through the sense of touch. Touch while walking. Touching with tongue and lips. Braille reading. The blind's touch and muscle illusion.

The blind's perception. Optic perception. Surrogates of perception. Hearing and notions. Touch schemes. The reproduction and evocation of touch ideas. The idea of space. The meaning of hearing-impressions for the perception of space.

The blind's possibility of orientation in space.

The idea of time.

The memory of the blind.

The imagination of the blind.

Intelligence.

Feeling.

Will.

Individuality of the blind.

The blind's behaviour in life.

The structure of the psychics of the blind since birth.

The blind who have recovered their sight after an operation.

Deaf-blind.

THE METHODIC OF TEACHING AND EDUCATION OF THE BLIND CHILD

(Lectures, lessons and discussions)

The importance of the knowledge of the blind's psychology in their pedagogy.

The limits of the educational possibilities of the blind and the scope of their teaching.

The sightless child is brought into school. Defects of home teaching and — as result — the necessity of a "Kindergarten" and boarding-school.

The recognition of the objects of exterior world. The process of recognition depending on the sensibility, perception, attention, memory. The way of the blind's association of ideas and their perception.

Special features of the blind child's character. The development of its feelings and will.

Pedagogical and didactic conclusions. The school's problems and means in teaching the blind.

Principles of the blind's teaching and education. The plan of the blind child's occupations in the first weeks of his stay at school.

Programme and Methods.

Physical education. Gymnastics, games and sports. Formation of independence. Teaching of the senses. Object-lessons. Development of the imagination. Teaching of space — orientation.

Boarding-school and school life.

Teaching the mother-tongue. Special methods and didactic means in teaching to read and write. Braille's alphabet. Psychologic principles of this alphabet and its superiority over other systems. The meaning of the touch and muscle sense in teaching to read and write. Special didactic means.

Teaching of mathematic. Special mathematic signs and special auxiliary school-means.

Teaching of geography. Special didactic adaptations. Building in sand, moulding in clay and "drawing" of maps and plans. Special auxiliary school-means.

Natural history. Auxiliary school-means.

History. Auxiliary school-means.

Excursions, their methodics and importance in the education of the blind.

Hand-work. Moulding and its meaning in the education of the blind children.

Singing and music in the blind's education.

Drawings and means of adapting them.

Programme of the elementary school for blind and the difference between it and the ordinary Elementary Schools for sighted (all classes).

The difference, between teaching separate subjects, compared with schools for sighted.

Principal features of the education of the blind children. Organisation of the school and boarding-school life from the educational point of view. The tasks of a blind children's teacher and educator.

The principles of a work-school, applied to the blind.

The instalation of a class in the elementary teaching of the blind (From the didactic and esthetic point of view).

The plan of lessons and employments of a blind child in a school for beginners.

The choice of a profession and the professional preparation.

Outdoor assistance. General features of the social assistance to the blind. Legislature for the blind.

THE HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

(Lectures, reports).

Essential knowledge about the blind.

First traces of the assistance to the blind in the East. First traces of the assistance to the blind in the West.

The history of the society's relation to the blind,

Three stages of development of the assistance to the blind.

The features of the assistance to the blind up to the end of the XVIII century.

The society's view on the blind, prevailing at that time.

Diderot's „Lettres sur les aveugles". The meaning of this study in the development of the educational assistance to the blind. The beginning of a new era in this assistance.

The first experiences in teaching the blind. Valentin Haüy. His ideas about the possibilities of educating the blind. First realisa-

tions of his plan. Valentin Haüy about the action of schooling the blind. Echoes of this movement out of France. **27**

The analyse of Valentin Haüy's „Essai sur l'Education, des Aveugles”.

A sketch of the development of Education Assistance to the blind in different countries.

France as the protectress of this movement.

The history of the writing of the blind. Principal stages of this development.

The meaning of Braille's alphabet in the education of the blind and their life in general.

Further development of these methods of teaching.

The best establishments for blind and their organisation.

Periodicals. Libraries. Organisations. Congresses and their meaning.

The history of education assistance to the blind in Poland. Education establishments. Societies. Assistance.

*

As to informations, concerning the organisation and above mentioned studies, please kindly apply to the State Institute of Special Pedagogy (20, Aleje Ujazdowskie, Warsaw, Poland), where the Direction will be glad to serve you.



XX



THE ABOVE PICTURE OF AN EAGLE FEEDING FOUR CHICKLINGS
IS THE EMBLEM OF THE ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL PROVISION

ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL PREVISION

Social Prevision of the blind in Poland is the natural result of the general laws on assistance and social prevision (law of August the 16-th 1923).

The mentioned law is based on three principles: *a)* on the absolute duty of giving protection. *b)* on charging communes of performing this duty (certain exceptions are admitted); *c)* on regulating the charges on the communes, according to local conditions.

Social Prevision in Poland contains not only the modes of protection, described below, but also the prophylactic, as results from the following law definition: *Social Prevision means providing out of public funds for the necessities of persons, who permanently, or temporarily are unable to do it by their own means or work, as well as taking preventing measures against the above state*".

Besides the above mentioned, social prevision includes: the protection of cripples, especially the heavily crippled; the blind, as well as those, who have lost sight, are considered as belonging to the latter category.

The aims of such protection can be reached as follows: with children by means of taking care of the education, with youth: by helping them to prepare themselves for professional work, with cripples: by assistance to restore the loss or diminished labour ability. This can be also realised by the giving of indispensable professional labour-implements and of ordinary help, as: securing the necessary food, lodging, clothes etc.

In special cases, when juridical or physical persons are not obliged by any regulation or other legal title to pay the indispensable life charges, the duty of performing social prevision passes to Community Unions. The State assists those, towards whom it has out of a public title special duties, as well as in the cases when the Communal Unions can not afford it.

30 The State and Communal Unions run their own help institutions, but are also entitled to fulfil assistance through suitable institutions, according to agreement.

The above mentioned law contains fundamental regulations and one of the respective articles foresees detailed statutes and respective execution prescriptions, which regulate the organisation and the way of performing social assistance in special branches.

Dealings, concerning assistance to the blind have not yet been regulated by special statutes, nevertheless some of these problems are already determined by legal prescriptions.

First of all, this concerns the blind war invalids, whose special rights were secured by general regulations of the war invalids assistance. By virtue of these prescriptions the war invalids, who entirely lost sight in consequence of military service, are acknowledged as heavily crippled and as such are entitled to receive a 100% invalid war pension and 25% of this pension additionally as nurse supplement, if they are living with their family and do not profit from the possibility if being placed in invalid homes.

According to the mentioned general law, blind war invalids have the right to free schooling and professional preparation in suitable establishments at the State's cost, whereas those, unable of earning their life and left without assistance, can be placed in respective establishments — "invalid homes".

The blind war invalids, professionally reeducated in any of the special invalid establishments and having sufficient knowledge for independent profession, may receive one for all, at States cost a complete set of tools for establishing their own workshop; they are also entitled to get a Braille slate.

The blind invalids, performing an intellectual profession, requiring a continual use of Braille writing can get a typewriter with raised dots standards, in exceptional cases can be provided with a dictaphone and speaker (parlograph) and in case of justified need, with an ordinary typewriter. The repair of these machines is accomplished at State expenses.

The blind war invalids, who have lost sight in such a degree, that makes them unable to walk without help, are entitled to get a dog guide. In case of justified renouncement, they may obtain a compensation, amounting to the additional maintenance cost of a dog guide.

Each blind war invalid may get a special watch for sightless.

Employers in agriculture, industry, trade and communication are obliged by law to engage on each 50 workers at least one war invalid seriously damaged, and to this category belong also the entirely blind people. The invalids are placed through the State Labour Mediation Offices.

The blind war invalids, travelling on authority's demand, have a right to the reimbursement of their travelling expenses and boarding expenses during the journey. The above laws concern also the blind's travelling-companion.

Moreover the blind war invalids enjoy a specially careful State assistance, and can obtain: concessions for the sale of monopoly articles, granted subsidies and pecuniary assistance in order to better their economic existence in a larger scope than other invalids.

*

As it is seen from the above, the special legislation connected with the assistance to the blind in Poland is not only far from solving that problem, but even the most important actual questions, concerning this matter are not yet sufficiently settled. The political, economical and social state of the country could easily account for this fact, but the following, most exact statistical report about the development of blind assistance activity shows, that — in spite of the lack of legislation — there is an improvement in the whole action.

Before the loss of Independence, at the end of the XVIII-th century, the public charity regulations in Poland were very advanced for their time. After the loss of Independence, various modifications were made for purposes that often underwent humanitarian action and only served the policy of the occupants, subjecting the political and social needs of the population to their own tendencies and politics.

The history of public and private charity in Poland, during over a 100 years occupation, could give quite improbable and unheard of examples of struggle for the right of existence and social benefit and welfare. This however was unable to break the activity of long years tradition and thus it persists, forming natural foundations for further development of humanitarian action in Poland. It is evident, that these conditions had a restraining influence; therefore the work to be done is much greater, than one could

32 expect. It needs time to balance the damages and delays caused by the above mentioned facts. Moreover — the country, having been for a long period the arena of the World War in the East, cannot also supply necessary funds fast enough to repair different similar defects in other branches of national economy.

One must take into consideration all these conditions and circumstances especially, when comparing the blind protection activity in Poland with other countries, where such exceptional conditions are unknown.

Only after having mentioned the above, we can give a numeral illustration of this activity, presenting exactly the state of the prevision of the blind in Poland. But here it is necessary to refer to part 1 of this work, containing the general numeral data concerning the population and the blind in Poland.

*

The actual state of the assistance and social prevision of the blind in Poland, dating from December the 31, 1930, is shown by the following table.

In order to illustrate better the above assertion of quick development of this assistance in Independent Poland, we here-by present the list of establishments for the blind in successive order of their opening.

In the post-war period 5 institutions were founded, between 1922—1928. This proves, that within the period of seven years as many institutions were opened, as previously within the period of 60 years. Formerly one institution was founded during 12 years, presently: one in two years time.

(TABLE I)

Beside the number of institutions it would be important to give the number of blind, assisted in these establishments in the pre-war period, as the comparison would be of greater use, unfortunately we do not dispose of precise data. Yet in a certain degree this lack can be removed by examining the numbers interesting for the period from 1920—1930.

Number of blind people in different Establishments.

(TABLE II)

According to the latter table 262 blind people profited till 1920 in 5 establishments of public assistance, i. e. 52.4 persons for one

Departments	Year of opening									
	1851	1853	1869	1889	1910	1922	1923	1927	1928	
Poland ¹⁾	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	
Central departments . .	—	—	1	—	1	1	1	—	1	
Eastern " . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	
Western " . .	—	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	
South " . .	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

TABLE II

Departments	Number of assisted in the years											
	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	
Poland	262	273	294	350	345	434	536	639	816	1.076	1.407	
Central Departments	109	110	103	137	128	157	214	310	425	663	882	
Eastern "	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	25	35	
Western "	127	131	155	173	179	231	278	277	330	338	435	
South "	26	32	36	40	38	46	44	52	53	50	55	

establishment, whereas in 1920, 1.407 persons were placed in 10 establishments, which means 140 7 persons for one establishment. In the mentioned period the number of blind persons assisted, increased about $5\frac{1}{2}$ times.

It must be noticed that besides the ten above mentioned institutions, Poland possesses 3 more of a protective character (printing offices, advice offices etc.) which are not included in the law of social protection (aid). A central Union of all institutions for the blind, is also being organised, so that Poland has 14 institutions and schools for the blind.

Among the ten relief institutions there are 8 private ones, 1 of Charity Funds, and 1 of the local Government. The fact of private institutions prevailing in number, does not necessarily

¹⁾ In all the tables of this part of report the city of Warsaw is included in the data of the Central Departments.

34 mean that they are entirely run on private funds, as part of their expences are met out of public funds, gifts and receipts, as is shown in the following table:

TABLE III

Departments	Total number of Institutions	Total sum of incomes	Governmental Subventions		Subventions from Communes		Grants from institutions and particulars		Receipts for teaching and board	
			Number of the Institutions	Sum in zlotys	Subventioned Institutions	Sum in zlotys	Subventioned Institutions	Sum in zlotys	Subventioned Institutions	Sum in zlotys
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Poland . .	10	1,438.692	7	225.405	8	258.739	7	63.709	8	140.360
Central Departments	5	898.599	4	194.505	4	69.698	4	151.437	3	32.628
East Departments	1	29.420	1	9.300	—	—	—	—	1	8.433
West Departments	3	462.912	1	10.000	3	180.987	2	9.510	3	97.130
South Department's	1	47.761	1	11.600	1	8.054	1	2.762	1	2.169

Adding the sums of the rubrics 5, 7, 9 and 11 together, we obtain 788.213 zł^1), which sum, compared to 1.438.692 (rubric 3) shows us, that the subventions, grants and receipts cover 55% of all the expences in the institutions, leaving 45% to their own means.

Apart these governmental and community subsidies, there still exist gifts in nature and other governmental help, as for instance: sending special teachers for blind to other existing schools.

The proportion of the percentage of subventions, grants and receipts in the general sum of incomes, is as follows:

(TABLE IV)

The proportion of the percentage of subventions, grants and receipts rubrics: (3 to 6) in the general sum of incomes, is in average of 55% in Poland. This sum in the different groups of Departments is varying as follows: 50%, 60,3%, 64,3%, 51,5%.

¹⁾ One U. S. A. dollar = about 8,9-zlotys.

Departments	Incomes in zlotys	Govern- mental Subven- tions	Com mu- nes subven- tions	Institutions and particulars	Receipts for the education and board
1	2	3	4	5	6
Poland	100	15,7	18,0	11,4	9,8
Central Departments	100	21,6	7,9	16,9	3,6
East "	100	31,6	—	—	28,7
West "	100	2,1	39,1	2,1	21,0
South "	100	24,3	16,9	5,8	4,5

The below table shows us the number and age of assisted blind people. The kind of prevision and social assistance they receive, is divided into characteristic groups, as follows:

a) "External Help", temporary financial and medicinal help, gifts in nature etc.

b) Work, Teaching and Board for blind, lodged in town.

c) Work, Board, Clothing and Lodging in the Establishment.

(TABLE V)

It is characteristic, that in the full-board and lodging assistance, the number of children is prevailing, being 240, against 174 adults, this corresponds with 48% of children and youth against about 42% of adults.

In the other two kinds of assistance we notice: 99,3% of adults against 70% of youth, that is: 7 children in 986 adults.

This is easy to be explained, as education is the prevailing side in the boarding and lodging assistance (groups: b and c) and can best be applied to youth, while adults, in their very difficult private and family life, often seek „External Help".

The influence, which family life conditions have on the question of necessary help to the blind, is plainly seen in the following Table:

(TABLE VI)

Thus 704% (71%) married, widowers, widows and divorce blind (sum: rubric 6 & 9) and only 289 (29%) unmarried (sum: rubrics 4 & 5) profit from a) and b) assistance.

TABLE V

Departments	Kind of Assistance	A g e							Total
		up to	4—7	8—18	19—25	26—39	40—50	above 50 year	
Poland	a)	—	—	3	80	371	268	177	899
	b)	—	—	4	21	42	21	6	94
	c)	2	10	228	69	61	19	25	414
Central Departments .	a)	—	—	—	47	304	207	128	686
	b)	—	—	1	4	23	12	—	40
	c)	2	7	64	33	30	11	9	156
East Departments .	a)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	b)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	c)	—	—	18	7	10	—	—	35
West Departments .	a)	—	—	3	33	67	61	49	213
	b)	—	—	3	17	19	9	6	54
	c)	—	1	93	29	21	8	16	168
South Departments .	a)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	b)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	c)	—	2	53	—	—	—	—	55

In the c) assistance we see an absolutely different proportion, as only 12 (3%) married and as much as 402 (97%) unmarried blind profit of it.

Lastly, in the following Table we have a picture of the state of reading in Poland: Libraries, Printing Offices and knowledge of reading in raised dots.

(TABLE VII)

This Table shows us that the number of books for blind in Poland is altogether insufficient (in average: 7 books per blind) and that the necessity of increasing it is of the greatest importance.

Department	Kind of Assistance	Total	Bachelors	Spinsters	Married men	Married women	Widowers and divorced	widows and divorced
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
P o l a n d	a)	899	174	62	577	39	21	26
	b)	99	41	12	40	1	—	—
	c)	414	225	177	6	1	2	3
Central Departments .	a)	686	103	23	488	29	20	23
	b)	40	18	—	22	—	—	—
	c)	156	89	57	6	—	1	3
East Departments . .	a)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	b)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	c)	35	22	13	—	—	—	—
West Departments . .	a)	213	71	39	89	10	1	3
	b)	54	23	12	18	1	—	—
	c)	168	81	85	—	1	1	1
South Departments . .	a)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	b)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	c)	55	33	22	—	—	—	—

In general, the blind are busy in schools, or work in order to secure some pecuniary help. The list of occupations suitable for blind is not long, though various enough.

It sounds as follows:

1) brush-making	260	blind
2) basketry	127	"
3) weaving	125	"
4) crotcheting	62	"
5) Musicians and organists .	45	"
6) Chair-caning	37	"

7) Massage	29	"
8) Rope-weaving	20	"
9) Machine tricoting	11	"
10) Bag-making	11	"
11) Book-binding	9	"
12) Piano tuning	9	"
13) Teachers (professor-ship) .	8	"

TABLE VII

Departments	Institu- tions with Libraries	Number of volumes in these Libraries	Number of Institutions		Number of blind, reading Braille Type
			with Printing Offices	with book- copying Offices	
Poland	7	4558	2	3	670
Central Deprtmnts	2	605	1	1	357
East "	1	31	—	—	30
West "	3	3642	1	2	228
South "	1	280	—	—	55

Other industrial and educational activities: sewing, printing in embossed type, wooden-work, husbandry.

Interesting experiences are being made, in order to secure work to the blind in factories. It would be premature to judge about it at present, but we can assert, that the first officials have given full satisfaction to their employers. The right adaptation of the possibilities of the blind, to the work in factories and other enterprises can certainly give excellent results, but the space allotted to us is too limited to discuss this matter any longer.

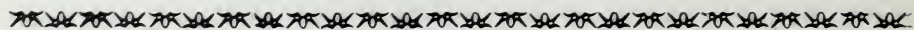
In conclusion, we present a table, including the blind assisted by the Social Prevention in 1930, and divided into special groups, according to *the causes* of their blindness:

(TABLE VIII)

It is to be noticed, that out of the total number of 1.407 assisted blind, only 143 blind since birth (10%) and as much as 1.264 other cases (90%) profit from the Social Prevention.

Departments	Total	B l i n d			
		since birth	from accident & war- blind	from eye- diseases	from other reasons
Total	1,407	145	692	350	222
Central Departments . .	882	55	547	166	114
East " . .	35	7	4	21	3
West " . .	435	77	134	131	93
South " . .	55	4	7	32	12





PROPHYLACTIC

Blindness and the more or less definite loss of sight is caused in most cases either by absolute lack of oculistic help and protection, or when the latter are insufficient and applied too late. Therefore the state of sanitary medical apparatus and especially of oculistic equipment is of paramount importance for preventing blindness.

In the pre-war period the oculistic equipment was insufficiently developed in Poland, due to the neglect of this matter by the States that conquered the country. In the Russian part the centre of oculistic help for the whole district was the Ophtalmic Institute, for 80 beds established in 1827 by Prince Lubomirski. Besides in the greater hospitals, in Warsaw and in Warsaw province, there were departments for eye diseases, which disposed of 120 beds. In the Prussian Poland the centre of oculistic help was the private sanitary station of dr. B. Wicherkiewicz in Poznań for 70 beds, as well as private sanitary stations and hospital departments for eye diseases in Poznań and the province disposing of about hundred beds. Thus in Prussian Poland there were about 170 beds for those affected with eye diseases. In the Austrian Poland the state of hospitals for eye diseases was comparatively the best. First of all there were two oculistic clinics, each for forty beds at the Universities of Cracow and Lwów, as well as two big departments for eye diseases, each for 80 beds at the public hospitals in these cities, and besides about 30 beds for those with sore eyes in the province hospitals.

Thus, before the re-establishment of the Polish State, we had in general on Polish Territory: 200 beds for eye-sickness in Russian Poland, 170 beds in Prussian Poland, 270 beds in Austrian Poland, 640 beds in total.

The number of oculistists equipment physicians was about 150. It is evident, that such oculistic equipment was very unsufficient to secure minimal oculistic help for 22.000.000 inhabitants living,

42 before the war within the area occupied by the 3 powers. Of course this fact greatly contributed to a considerable number of entirely or partly blind. Such was the pre-war state of the oculistic arsenal on Polish territory.

After the establishment of the Polish State, the Polish sanitary authorities taking into consideration the needs of a suitable oculistic apparatus, at once started to develop it. In spite of the hard economical conditions of the country they succeeded in reaching this purpose.

In 1928 Poland already possessed 1760 hospital beds for general eye diseases, and the medical staff consisted of 280 oculists. One bed was destined for 17.000 inhabitants, and one oculist was for 100.000 inhabitants.

The apparatus for the prevention of Trachoma reached a specially high development. On Polish land especially in the Northern and Eastern provinces, the trachoma was widely spread many years ago. After the war however the great immigration from Russia, contributed to the development of this disease throughout the whole country, destroying sight and often causing blindness. In order to overcome this plague, there were established special sanitary institutions, viz: a) trachoma sanitary stations, b) Dispensaries.

Trachoma sanitary stations were destined for the trachoma indoor cure of children, especially from charity boarding houses and infant schools, where the above mentioned disease was most harmful. Such sanitary stations are established not only for the purpose of cure, but also in order to secure complete protection, teaching, education as well as medical care for the children. Five greater trachoma sanatoriums for 1.200 persons were established as well as ten smaller additional ones for 1.000 children. Affected with trachoma, were subjected to cure and isolated in those sanatoriums.

From 1917 up to the end of 1930, in these Sanatoriums 7.699 children affected with trachoma were treated out of which 6.733 were registered as entirely healed. At present the number of sick having decreased, some of these sanatoriums have been closed. Two central sanatoriums, destined for about 1.000 sick are left.

Trachoma Dispensaries were destined for the treatment of outdoor patients affected with trachoma. Their duty also was to prevent trachoma and other eye diseases from spreading.

in 1925 there were 11 ambulatory trachoma sanitary stations

1926	"	"	26	"	"	"	"
1927	"	"	69	"	"	"	"
1928	"	"	197	"	"	"	"
1929	"	"	279	"	"	"	"
1930	"	"	337	"	"	"	"

At present the dispensaries are spread throughout the whole country. They can be found almost in each greater town and settlement. The following data are the best proof of the part played by these dispensaries in these Struggle against trachoma.

In 1929, 99.508 outdoor patients were looked after. In which 36.100 affected and 12.418 suspected of trachoma; 50.980 with other eye diseases.

709.644 medical consultations and dressings were given, of which 520.059 to persons affected, 54.407 to people suspected of trachoma. 135.199 to people with other eye diseases.

In 1930 the dispensaries show an almost twofold increase of their activity. In the first six months 99.903 patients were looked after, of which 42.379 affected with, 14.161 suspected of trachoma and 43.363 with other eye diseases.

492.197 medical consultations and dressings were given, of which 325.172 to patients affected with, 55.470 to those suspected of trachoma and III.555 to those with other eye diseases.

The importance of the anti-trachomical Dispensaries as preventive measures against blindness is still increased by the propaganda action, carried on in them by medical indications, distribution of pamphlets, by lectures, as well as by propagation of hygiene in the families of the sick, made by intelligence-nurses, who 1929 effected 22.297 home inquiries in the families of the sick.

As in hospitals the number of beds for eye diseases is insufficient and especially owing to the fact that some districts, very distant from great centres, are unable to profit from the hospital oculistic help, the Polish Red Cross established two movable oculistic columns. In 1929 and 1930 the latter worked in the Wilno district. The result of their activity is as follows:

	1929	1930
Number of patients under medicinal treatment against trachoma	2.298	3.304
Number of those suspected of trachoma	209	156
Number of those affected with other eye diseases	3.074	5.370
Totally .	5.581	8.930

Number of medical consultations given to affected			
with trachoma	14.091	19.815	
to suspected of trachoma	1.010	242	
to those with other eye diseases	5.620	6.964	
Totally .	20.721	27.021	
Number of operations			
	1.768	3.440	

We see of the above data that the antitrachomical apparatus: dispensaries as well as movable oculistic columns are of great assistance to the oculistic hospitals and enable the wide masses of population to make use of an immediate oculistic help. Thus they may be considered as effective preventive measures against blindness. The Health Insurance also greatly contributes in this respect, enabling the insured patients and their families to profit from oculistic help.

Thanks to the medical institutions fatal cases of various eye diseases, decrease. Besides a preventive activity consisting in protecting the eyes against harmful diseases was developed.

Causes of blindness, namely a) small pox, b) trachoma, c) gonorrhoea, have been regulated in Poland either by law or by certain legal regulations:

a) regarding small pox there exists the law about compulsory preventive vaccination (Journal of Laws No. 63 of July the 18 th 1919 item 372). Owing to this the cases of small pox in Poland are very rare, and thus this illness is no more considered as cause of blindness.

b) concerning trachoma by virtue of the Presidential Decree of 22-d March 1928, one is obliged to inform the authorities about any cases of trachoma. The same Decree binds to control such sick and introduces their compulsory treatment.

c) regarding the prevention of gonorrhoea inflammation of eyes with new-born, there exist special regulations for midwives with respect to the compulsory application of Crede's treatment.

As to fighting other factors, causing weakening or loss of sight, we notice great development of hygienical conditions in youth education as well as of the conditions in industry and office work. At the period when Poland was conquered, this action was greatly neglected.

Independent Poland started eye protection by giving out regulations for schools, workshops and offices, as to the standart and size of print (gothic print having been prohibited in the

schools) and prescriptions as to the use of spectacles and nets in schools, and some branches of industry. 45

In these ten years of Independence hundreds elementary schools containing about 10.000 school rooms and 60 buildings for grammar Schools have been built., answering in all respects to the demands of modern hygiene, and especially eye hygiene. Also, when establishing new work-shops and offices, eye hygiene demands must be observed, and this greatly contributes to the decrease of eye injuries and eye diseases as well as to the development of eye hygiene.

The spreading of general medical protection, as well as of oculistic help over large masses of population is of paramount importance for blindness prevention. Out of 3.500.000 children, attending elementary schools in Poland 1.500.000 are at present under medical protection, consisting in periodical general examinations with special consideration of eyes. In grammar schools medical protection is almost general, i. e. the whole youth attending this kind of schools, remains under medical protection. Over 1.000 special school physicians keep continual charge of the health of youth. School doctors are entrusted with the examination of all pupils twice a year, and special attention is drawn to the state of eyes (trachoma) and the force of sight. In greater centres, (Warsaw, Cracow, Lwow, Wilno, Lodz etc.) there exist special oculistic polyclinics for examination and medical treatment of children. The 100.000 children remaining in charity institutions are under continual medical protection, besides there are periodical examinations in order to separate children with sore eyes (trachoma).

In connection with the development of social insurance in our country, all the officials of industrial, commercial, administrative and other institutions are subjected to a preliminary medical examination. Besides they may profit of free medical treatment and oculistic help of the Health Insurance in case of need, and thus the contingent of persons under care of physicians, preventing neglect of eye injuries and eye diseases, is considerably increased.

The annual examination of about 400.000 persons, subject to military service, becomes also of a certain importance, as then cases of trachoma, weakness or loss of sight may be revealed.

Finally one must mention the importance of eye hygiene propaganda, which not only constitutes a part of education programs in all public schools but is carried out by different institutions

- 46 throughout wide masses of population, by suitable popular lectures, distribution of pamphlets, indications, instructions, leaflets, proclamations and propaganda placards. The fact that in 1930 50.000 prints about the prevention of trachoma were spread is the best proof of this activity.

OCULISTIC EQUIPMENT IN POLAND¹⁾
1930

DEPARTMENTS	Number of beds for those with sore eyes in hospital	Number of beds for affected with t a- choma in sanatoriums	Number of trachoma dispensaries
1. Department of Warsaw with the city Warsaw	302		53
2. Department of Lodz	110		40
3. " of Kielce	21	460	40
4. " of Lublin	63		11
5. " of Białystok	11		19
6. " of W lno	165		48
7. " of Nowogródek . .	3		4
8. " of Wolhynia	—		3
9. " of Poznań	248		15
10. " of Pomerania . . .	102		8
11. " of Upper Silesia .	95		—
12. " of Cracow	232	480	26
13. " of Lwow	260		18
14. " of Stanisławów . .	18		9
15. " of Tarnopol	50		29
16. " of Polesie	40		14
	1.720	940	337

¹⁾ This specification concerns only public and social hospitals and sanitary stations, but does not include private oculistic sanatoriums and consulting rooms.

In spite of all these efforts, the Prevention of Blindness in Poland is far from the perfect conditions in the U. S. of North America, where for long years activity has been helped by big funds, offered for this purpose by American Citizens. In 1929, after the XII Occulist Congress, owing to american initiative, the International Union of Blindness Prevention was founded in order to facilitate and coordinate this work in all countries. 47

The representatives of Poland called to this Union, have undertaken steps to establish a polish Association, based on international instructions. We believe that such an organisation will greatly contribute to the activity of blindness prevention in Poland, and to a general improvement of health conditions in the country.





WARSAW. BLIND GOING FOR A WALK



WARSAW. THE STATE INSTITUTE FOR DEAF-DUMB AND BLIND



WARSAW. PHYSICAL EXERCISES IN THE STATE INSTITUTE FOR
DEAF-DUMB AND BLIND



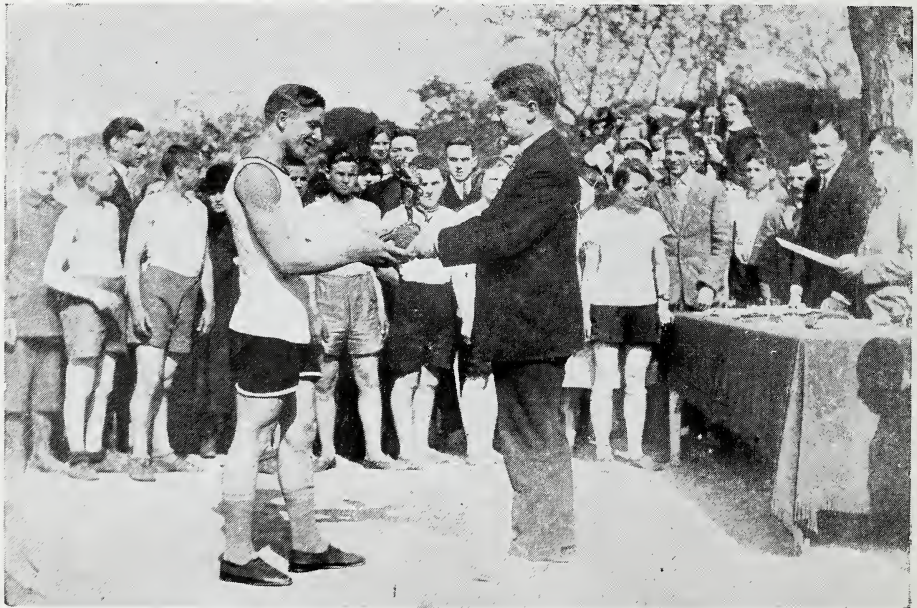
LWÓW. THE INSTITUTION FOR BLIND



LWÓW. BLIND CHILDREN PLAYING IN THE GARDEN
IN WINTER



WARSAW. PHYSICAL EXERCISES IN THE STATE INSTITUTE
FOR DEAF-DUMB AND BLIND



WARSAW. THE FIRST PRIZE IN SPORT, AWARDED
TO A BLIND COMPETITOR



LWÓW. BLIND CHILDREN ON SLEDGES



LWÓW. THE CULTURE OF PLANTS IN THE STATE
INSTITUTE FOR DEAF-DUMB AND BLIND



WILNO. THE SPECIAL-SCHOOL FOR BLIND CHILDREN



WARSAW. I-ST LEVEL, BLIND CHILDREN MODELLING BIRDS



WARSAW. 2-D LEVEL. BLIND CHILDREN STUDYING THE
COLLABORATION OF VILLAGE AND TOWN



WILNO. BLIND CHILDREN MODELLING A HOUSE



LASKI. (NEAR WARSAW) THE "KINDERGARTEN"



WARSAW. LEVEL 1 & 2. ANIMALS & BIRDS MODELLED
BY BLIND CHILDREN



LASKI (NEAR WARSAW) THE BRAILLE PRINTING-OFFICE



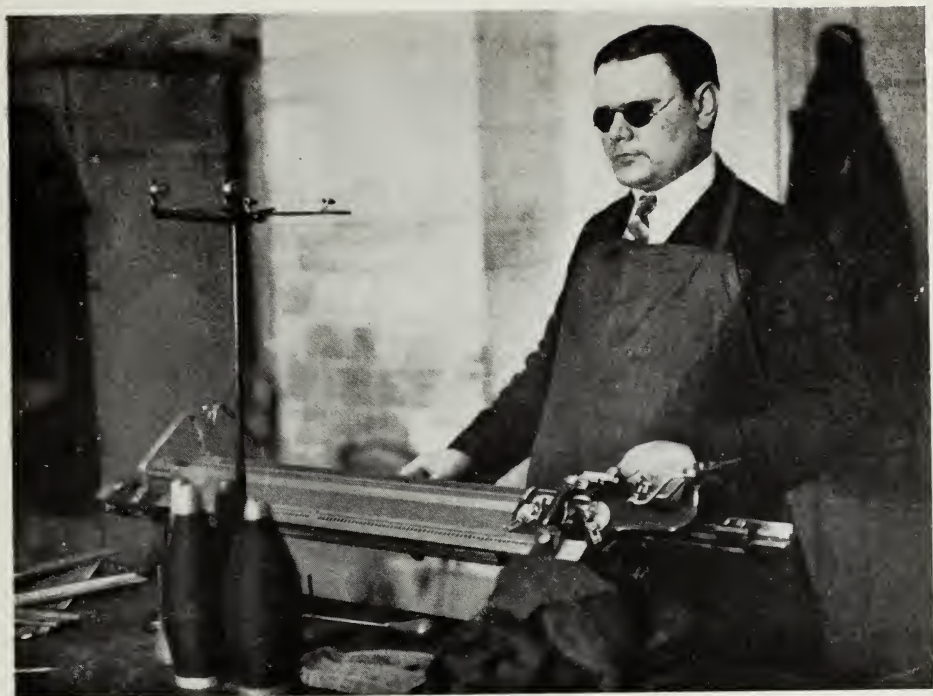
WILNO. A CORNER OF THE BASKET-ROOM



WARSAW. "LATARNIA" (THE SOCIETY OF HELP TO THE BLIND)
A LESSON ON GEOGRAPHY



WARSAW. "LATARNIA" THE BRUSH-MAKING WORK-SHOP



WARSAW. "LATARNIA" BLIND MAN KNITTING



WARSAW. "LATARNIA" THE MACHINE-KNITTING WORK-SHOP



LWÓW. BLIND TYPISTS



BLIND CHILDREN IN THE FRESH AIR



LASKI (NEAR WARSAW). "THE ASSOCIATION FOR HELPING
THE BLIND" THE CHAPEL



LASKI (NEAR WARSAW). "THE ASSOCIATION FOR HELPING
THE BLIND" THE LIBRARY



WITKOWICE. SANATORIUM FOR AFFECTED WITH TRACHOMA



LASKI (NEAR WARSAW). "THE ASSOCIATION FOR HELPING THE BLIND". THE MAIN BUILDING



WITKOWICE. THE DOCTOR'S STUDY-ROOM



WARSAW. POLISH SECTION OF THE AMERICAN BRAILLE PRESS
THE SENDING OUT OF THE BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY



TRAVELLING OCULISTIC DISPENSARY AT WORK



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